LABOUR MONTHLY

Founded 1921 Editor: R. Palme Dutt

Home: Scarborough: The Future

SCIENCE AND SOCIALISM

The Editor

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CHARTER FOR WOMEN

John E. Newton

★

A NEW CLIMATE?

Ivor Montagu

★

Also: articles on Youth—Vietnam—Ireland

NOVEMBER 1963

Two Shillings

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LABOUR MONTHLY

VOL. XIV No. 11 NOVEMBER . 1963

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Notes of the Month

SCIENCE AND SOCIALISM

The people saw on their hindquarters the old feudal coats of arms, and deserted with loud and irreverent laughter.

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO.

October 21, 1963

The cards are on the table. After all the under-the-counter shuffling Earl Home has emerged as the Chosen Leader of Britain. Chosen by whom? By parliament? Parliament had no say in the choice until it was all finished. By the voice of the people? All the public opinion polls showed the opposite. By any vote of any conclave or committee or organ of his party? No. By what is euphemistically termed 'the customary processes'—that is, by the customary combination of hocus-pocus mumbo-jumbo and hard anti-democratic reality which is the essential tradition of the glorious unwritten British Constitution. But this appointment of Home, the physical embodiment of the Upper Hundred of the biggest land-owning aristocracy allied with the financial sharks, in open defiance of any popular feeling, without a pretence of any popular following or support, has brought into the open and revealed to all with conspicuous and pictorial vividness the reality of the developing class fight which can no longer be concealed by the mellifluous tones of a Butler or a Macmillan.

A Portent and A Warning

Britain's political situation is beginning to stir from the stifling climate of stabilised reaction of the past dozen years into an era of rising economic and political struggles. Neither the apparent tranquillity of Scarborough, with every crucial question of policy buried discreetly under the carpet in order to maintain the enthusiasm of unity for victory, nor the unedifying noisy spectacle of the self-absorbed scramble of the Tory top contenders for place and position in the succession to Macmillan, making a mockery of their Blackpool Conference, can conceal this real character of the era into which we are now entering. Following Profumo and Denning, the Conservative cabal's week of the long knives in their backstage grapple for the leadership of 'Cosa Nostra' has assuredly furnished the people with a further demonstration of the moral and political degeneracy and bankruptcy of the ruling financial oligarchy. But

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the choice of Lord Home at this moment; the choice, at this moment of nadir of Tory electoral fortunes, not of some 'progressive' looking figurehead, but of the most notorious anti-popular old Etonian Munichite red-baiting fourteenth Earl, one of the very few genuine relics of the old feudal land-robbing aristocracy, to be the visible face and image and leader of British 'democracy' in the forty-seventh year of the victorious Russian socialist revolution—this is indeed a symptom and a portent not to be lightly laughed away, but to be considered seriously as a warning signpost of our times, of the British political regime under which we suffer, and of the most elementary tasks we have still to fulfil in the fight for democracy and for socialism.

'Dost Thou Remember Sicily?'

Disraeli used to describe the British ruling oligarchy as 'the Venetian oligarchy'. At the present moment it might be more appropriate to recall Sicily. A graphic picture of the Sicilian aristocracy was provided by Frederico De Roberto in his book, published in English last year, *The Viceroys*:

> Once the power of our family came from kings. . . . Now it comes from the people. The difference is more in name than in fact. Of course it's not pleasant to depend on the mob, but . . . history is monotonous repetition; men have been, are and always will be the same. Certainly there seems an abyss between the Sicily of 1860, still more or less feudal, and this of today; but the difference is all on the surface. The first man to be elected by near-universal suffrage is not a member of the working class, or a bourgeois or a democrat; it is I, because I am called Prince of Francalanza. The prestige of nobility is not and cannot be extinguished.

Backward Sicily might seem a remote comparison for 'advanced' finance-capitalist Britain now all agog for 'modernisation' at the hands of both governmental parties. But the Valachi hearings in the United States have indicated that the tentacles of the Mafia are not so remote from the innermost workings of the foremost citadel of the Western political system. The origins of the Profumo family and their not inconsiderable fortuntes stem from Italy. Perhaps at this moment it is not inappropriate that the most modern, most up-to-date British Toryism of the great imperialist monopoly interests of the City, which still bears on its coat of arms the dagger that perfidiously under the flag of peaceful negotiation stabbed Wat Tyler, should choose as its paladin and banner-bearer the scion of the feudal land-grabbing family whose 'detestable reputation for instability and treachery' was recorded by Tom Johnston in his 'Our

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Noble Families'. At a moment when the fight for peaceful co-existence is reaching new heights and opening new horizons for humanity, and the signs of developing U.S.-Soviet negotiations are watched with no little anxiety in certain British quarters, the proclamation of a Munichite anti-Yalta Premier is itself a programme. No doubt in the view of these sections 'East-West? Home's Best'.

Tory Calculations

Even the fondest admirer of Lord Home would hardly claim that he is a likely election-winner. Why then choose him? Certainly it looks as if the Tory calculators may be already discounting the next election as lost (although of course the labour movement will be wise not to be lulled by any 'in the bag' sweet dreams, and should rather use the moment of opportunity to press the maximum offensive). In that case a removable caretaker might be regarded as a convenient scapegoat to leave a clear field for the next man when the decisive fight for the come-back is launched. Such an interpretation is open to anyone's speculation. But in practice the man in charge, once installed, is not always so easily removed. The example of Attlee in the case of the Labour Party has shown how the 'third man', supposed to represent the safe inoffensive minor personality replacing the clash of two major combatants, can become the permanent incumbent blocking everybody and fatally deflecting policy. But what is clear from the choice of Home as their Leader and temporary Prime Minister is that the Tories are not primarily calculating on the most favourable shop-window for the next election.

Battles of Today and Tomorrow

In other words, their present calculations are running, not merely to the next election, but to the election after that. They are calculating that the prospective Labour Government, since it has pledged itself not to attempt any drastic socialist changes or taking over of the big monopolies, and has further pledged itself to maintain the full cost and possible increased cost of the cold war arms programme, while at the same time it promises to embark on a vast and costly expansion and technical re-equipment programme within these shackling conditions, will in consequence be compelled to carry through such measures of wage restraint, denial of immediate social benefits, increased taxation and burdens on the workers and general

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austerity, as will result in a wave of unpopularity to lift Toryism back to power in 1969 as in 1951. But the Tories are equally aware that such a situation could not reproduce all the conditions of 1951, especially with the accelerating rate of change in the modern world, and that in consequence of such an outcome vast new currents of revolt, far exceeding Bevanism, would be generated within the labour movement, and would find reflection in the advance of the Communist Party and of the left and of every form of militancy. Hence their choice of Home at this moment as their banner-bearer (with the equally ultra-reactionary and Tory-rabble-rouser, Hailsham, as the nearest rival contender) is already equivalent to raising their flag, not so much for winning the next election, as for the sharpening social and political battles of the coming era which they are foreseeing.

Verb. Sap. for Labour

In face of these manifest calculations of Toryism the trade union and labour movement will be well advised not to bask in roseate honeymoon pictures of the coming election victory (which in any case has still to be won), nor to chortle with delight at the electoral gift on a plate offered to them by the presentation of such a figure of aristocratic ineptitude and popular contempt as the voice and image of modern Toryism, but rather to recognise very seriously the nature of the challenge which is being presented, and to examine the real perspective of the next five years in Britain and the world a little more soberly than appears to have been done in the golden-hued, but very indistinctly drawn, visions of Scarborough. The appointment of Home as Premier of Britain in 1963 is not merely an insult to the British people. It is also a challenge, and a challenge which needs to be met. The prospect offered today by Toryism and the big monopolies for whom it speaks is no longer the velvet glove of a Butler, but a battlefront already foreshadowed in preliminary form over the crucial issue of wage-restraint, which was plainly rejected (in spite of the General Council's advocacy) at the Trades Union Congress, but evaded and sugared over at the Labour Party Conference.

Preparedness, the Left and the Communist Party

The trade union and labour movement will need the fullest preparedness to meet these battles in front, for which the shipbuilding employers' blunt initial refusal of any concession to their 200,000

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workers has been a foretaste. Preparedness means not to let the guard be lowered in the name of electoral sweetness and light. All experience has shown, and the lesson of 1959 confirmed it again, that the lowering of militancy does not win elections, but loses them. Preparedness requires, not the abdication of the left, but the strengthening of the left in order to strengthen the whole movement for the fight. The strengthening of the left requires, as a cardinal element for the fulfilment of this aim, the strengthening of the indisputably principal fighting organisation and political expression of the left, the Communist Party, and the only daily newspaper of the working class, the indomitable *Daily Worker*, which alone maintains itself (like *Labour Monthly*) without any subsidies and solely by support of its readers. It requires the understanding of the role of the Communist Party among all sections of the left. It requires the strengthening of the co-operation of the Communist Party with all sections of the left and with all sections of the labour movement. Unity for the defeat of Toryism needs to be combined with such an advance of the fighting spirit and political consciousness of the whole labour movement. The fulfilment of these aims is vital, equally for victory in the coming election battle, and for victory in the further battles which will follow and reach new heights beyond the election. The experience of the Scarborough Labour Party Conference, where the eager anticipation of the electoral battle and unity of will for the defeat of Toryism was accompanied by a dangerous trend to political abdication in the name of electoral expediency, and evasion of the brutal and testing issues which will in fact have to be faced, has reinforced this warning.

Re-Defining Socialism

At Scarborough Harold Wilson re-defined Socialism. He said:

> We are re-defining and re-stating our Socialism in terms of the scientific revolution.

Re-defining Socialism has always been a favourite occupation—one might almost say, an occupational disease—of Labour statesmen. Long ago the Webbs, in the days when they fought Marxism (before their final courageous recognition of their error in failing to recognise the correctness of the Marxist theory of capitalism) used to demand that Socialism should be re-stated in terms compatible with the Union Jack and the Ten Commandments. MacDonald used to demand 'Socialism pure and simple, Socialism undistracted by political tactics, Socialism with a vision fixed above the smoke of

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daily strife'. Arthur Greenwood re-defined Socialism as 'a society where the community has responsibilities to the individual, and where the individual has responsibilities to his fellows'. Herbert Morrison re-defined Socialism as 'the assertion of social responsibility in matters which are properly of social concern'. And so on without end. In short, anything and everything except common ownership of the means of production. Thus Harold Wilson was re-treading well-trodden ground when he offered to 're-define' Socialism 'in terms of the scientific revolution'.

Credit Line to Unilever

All his expansion of his theme made clear that the vast scientific and technological revolution, whose benefits he was describing in such glowing terms, was envisaged by him as being accomplished within a framework of the continuance of the biggest monster monopoly combines, I.C.I., Unilevers, Royal Dutch-Shell and the rest, in possession. Indeed, unkind critics hinted that some of the most glowing passages and examples with whose brilliant *expertise* he dazzled the simple minds of his untutored audience had been lifted from the recently published Report on the forthcoming beneficent marvels of automation and technological development to be accomplished during the next twenty years under the benign guidance of the great monopolies—the Report brought out, appropriately enough, under the auspices of Unilevers, with the title *1984*, price fifteen shillings.

From Utopia to Science

One of the co-founders of modern Socialism, Engels, wrote a work (actually three chapters taken from a larger book) entitled *The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science,* which has probably been translated into more languages, circulated in more countries, and taught more generations of socialists than any work since the *Communist Manifesto.* But when Engels spoke of developing Socialism to 'Science' he did not mean quite the same thing as Harold Wilson. Engels meant that all the utopian aspirations for a society of justice and equality and happiness brought within reach by the vast new scientific and technical developments of the industrial revolution, whose significance was perceived already by the brilliant and benevolent big manufacturer, Robert Owen, could only be fulfilled when the sentimental aspirations of early socialism could

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be translated into a science of society, a scientific understanding of the laws of motion of class society and social development and the consequent mastery of the forms and methods of social transformation.

Forty-Six Years of Proof

The proof of this has been established, no longer only in a textbook of theory, but in the living practice of human history, over one-third of the world. Only where Communism leads the working class and the people has socialism been established. This month we celebrate the forty-sixth anniversary of the Russian socialist revolution. Forty-six years ago the Russian working class led the way and were the first to win power. This example inspired the Labour Party a year later to inscribe for the first time the aim of socialism on its programme. During these forty-six years there have been three Labour Governments. After them all, landlordism and monopoly remains in possession. Today Harold Wilson informs us that the 'democratic process' of half a century 'has ground to a halt with a fourteenth earl'. A contrast between two outcomes of these forty-six years.

Science of Social Revolution

During these forty-six years the Russian workers have successfully maintained their power against every assault and armed offensive of reaction throughout the world, including that protégé of Home, Hitler. They inherited the most derelict war-stricken ruin of backwardness, illiteracy and filth, such that H. G. Wells, when he visited them in the early years, could only describe the scene in his book *Russia in the Shadows* as a desolate foretaste of the end of civilisation. They have not only completed the building of the first socialist society in the world, and entered on the advance to communist society. They have not only led the way in ending unemployment and establishing the first system of universal social security and a universal health service without contributions. They have established such standards of scientific and technological development and education that Wilson at Scarborough can only refer to them as lofty targets, ten times the British level, to aspire to emulate. But Wilson did not mean by that to emulate their socialism or the abolition of capitalism and landlordism. For the programme of Wilson is to apply science to everything in Britain except to society. Wilson jibs at the application of science to the theory of society; he admits

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that he could not get past Page 2 of *Capital*. Wilson renounces the science of society. For the science of society is Communism.

Spirit of 1945

Earl Attlee at Scarborough remarked that he found at the Conference 'the spirit of 1945'. He should know; for he did more than any man, in conjunction with Bevin, to murder that spirit and prepare the black fifties of Tory reaction. But there were some differences which he should recognise. First, in 1945 he never expected the Labour majority, which took him by surprise. At Scarborough the assumption of an approaching Labour majority was universal. Let us make sure there is no mistake this time. Second, the tide which swept Labour forward to victory in 1945 was the tide of popular enthusiasm for the united victory of the peoples over Nazism, and the hatred of Munichite Toryism which had rearmed Germany and brought on the second world war. Today Britain is the ally of a neo-Nazi Germany which has again been rearmed, in violation of the solemn pledges of 1945, by the bipartisan policy of Toryism and Labour. Third, in 1945 the tide of popular enthusiasm which swept Labour forward was the tide of enthusiasm for the Socialist Soviet Union and the Soviet armies which had smashed nine-tenths of the Nazi armies, and the belief that the British-Soviet Alliance was the guarantee to prevent the revival of German militarism and maintain peace in Europe. Today by that same bipartisan policy Britain is the ally of West German militarism in the cold war Nato military alliance against the socialist world; and the guest of honour at the Scarborough Rally was Brandt, the fiery apostle of the gospel of the recovery of the 'lost territories' of Germany, that is, of the expansion of Germany at the expense of neighbouring states. Fourth, in 1945 the electorate believed that Labour stood for socialism. At Scarborough even resolutions for extending nationalisation were ruled out. Thus there were some differences not without significance. A real recovery of the spirit of 1945 would require a corresponding policy.

Hamlet Without the Prince

The self-denying ordinance of the Conference to exclude questions of foreign policy, war and peace, armaments, nuclear weapons and

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CORRECTION

On p. 444, footnote line 9, in the October issue, 'contain' should read 'the text contains'.

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bases, and nationalisation, in the name of the necessity of maintaining electoral unity (an argument apparently accepted by the majority of those on the left, since the ruling was not challenged to the point of a division) stultified the role of the Conference as a policy-making body, and reduced it to the role of a pre-electoral demonstration. It is true that a vast volume of documents and programmes and speeches on a variety of home subjects, outlining large and undefined horizons for economic planning and expansion, a scientific revolution and improved social standards and benefits (no figures) and educational advance, were presented and adopted with enthusiasm. On some detail points there were even divisions brought to a vote, as in the vote against abolition of the public schools by 5 to 1, against abolition of pay beds by about the same, and against abolition of the 3-day waiting period for unemployment and sickness benefit. But in general it was obvious to all that in the modern world situation, the possibility of fulfilment of all the very loosely defined general aspirations on home policy, was basically governed by the decisive factors of international policy, foreign policy, the cold war, the obligations of Nato and the American alliance and the arms programme, and that the attempt to separate the two and exclude the major issues was a judgment of Solomon which could only result in killing both halves of the baby.

'Nothing New'

When Harry Crane on behalf of the Conference Arrangements Committee justified the exclusion of foreign policy from debate on the grounds that 'nothing new on the subject could be said at this stage', he achieved a historically memorable sally worthy to be recorded alongside the classic entry of Louis XIV in his diary on July 14, 1789: 'Nothing'. But in fact the opportunity of Scarborough was utilised by the leadership to make certain important pronouncements on foreign policy, only not inside the Conference where they could be discussed by the delegates. Thus at the Rally, Wilson, speaking alongside Brandt, replaced his previous warning against allowing any German finger, 'directly or indirectly, on the nuclear trigger', by a new definition declaring opposition to any 'independent nuclear power' for Germany, thereby implying the possibility of participation in Western nuclear power. Similarly Gordon Walker during the Conference took the opportunity to make a statement outside the Conference on October 1 to 'make it unequivocally plain that the Labour Party has been and is against the

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recognition' of the German Democratic Republic, and that any Labour M.P.s visiting it and making friendly speeches did not represent the Labour viewpoint. No opportunity for the M.P.s thus criticised or for any delegate to take up the question in the Conference. Similarly on the eve of the Conference, when British troops were being massed and engaged in the 'Malaysia' region, Gordon Walker assured Lord Home on September 18 that 'the Labour Party would completely back the Government . . . in any demands that British property and British interests should be protected'. A major issue of potential armed conflict in this region, which even Mr. Crane might find 'new'. It is evident that the self-denying ordinance of the Conference against consideration of foreign policy or the overseas armed actions of British imperialism was intended to apply to the delegates rather than to the leadership.

Wage Restraint

Even in the sphere of home policy the exclusion of any consideration of proposals for a major extension of nationalisation to take over the big monopolies inevitably meant that, taken in conjunction with the maintenance of the crippling cold war armaments burden, the very generalised programmes for planning and expansion and improvement of social conditions were remarkably lacking in concrete figures and targets (unless the proclamation of the need for ten million new jobs by the 1970s should be regarded as equivalent to a programme for their provision). Even on the crying scandal of the old age pensioners no immediate demand for any definite figure was offered. Thus, when it came down to brass tacks, the most important hard concrete immediate demand in the home field became the demand for wage restraint. This became the central issue at the Labour Party Conference, as it had been at the Trades Union Congress. The defeat of the General Council at the T.U.C. on this issue, by the adoption of the resolution declaring 'complete opposition to any form of wage restraint' created a problem for the Labour Party leadership at Scarborough. The problem was in fact met, not by changing the real policy of wage restraint (that policy had already been explicitly described by Wilson in terms of 'restraint' of wages and incomes in his address to the Transport Workers' Conference in July), but by the time-honoured technique of trying to dress up the old policy under a new formula ('planned growth of wages') and thus avoid a head-on collision.

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Wages and Profits Confidence Trick

The tactical method adopted at Scarborough was to present a resolution calling for 'an incomes policy to include salaries, wages, dividends and profits (including speculative profits) and social security benefits'. This, it was explained, did not mean wage restraint, but the 'planned growth of wages'. On the basis of this explanation the resolution was carried by 6,090,000 to 40,000. The hollowness of this resolution's pretence was exposed by the official statement of the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, Callaghan, at the Conference when he said that with regard to the promise to limit profits and dividends he had no idea how to do it:

> If I were asked to say what exactly we will have to do about profits and dividends I would be less than frank if I were not to acknowledge that there were many loopholes in what we tried to do between 1945 and 1950.

In place of any concrete proposition he promised that the Executive would 'consult with the Unions and Trades Union Congress about dividends, profits and taxation reform'. The real issue will not be so easily evaded.

The New Asceticism

Consciousness of this real perspective of disappointment of expectations of social benefits, and of necessary deprivation to meet the requirements for strengthening monopoly capitalism and rearmaments and cold war expenditure, was revealed in the repeated warnings of the Labour Party leadership at Scarborough against expecting any rapid social gains from the early years of a Labour Government. A new gospel of asceticism found favour in the name of fulfilling a 'high purpose' for Britain. Once again the authentic Crippsian note was struck to renounce materialism and embrace austerity for the sake of building up the competitive strength of capitalist Britain. Wilson, in his speech at Gloucester on September 14, denounced the 'materialist hedonism' preached by the Tories ('the Prime Minister had debauched Britain's public life by preaching a selfish materialist hedonism', *The Times* report, September 18, 1963). Brown at Scarborough warned against expecting too much 'material' benefits from the first years of a Labour Government:

> We have to recognise and say that not all the demands that will be made on us for material progress can be met early on in the lifetime of the next Government. . . We must be courageous and say to our people what is involved. . . In spite of all the appearances of a materialist society, it still remains true that there is in our people a tremendous yearning for something very much deeper.

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Sir Stafford, thou shouldst be living at this hour. Once again the spirit of sacrifice of the workers, which they would readily show for the building of socialism, is to be summoned for rebuilding and strengthening monopoly capitalism and maintaining the array of overseas bases and garrisons and £60,000,000 aircraft carriers to dominate the peoples of the Persian Gulf or South-East Asia (Labour's strategic policy, as Wilson explained at Hamburg in September, is for Britain to be 'strong East of Suez').

Labour Austerity—Tory Spending Spree

And where did the Crippsian austerity lead? To socialism? No. To the Tory comeback. All that the Labour Government of Attlee and Bevin and Cripps had stinted and saved to put British capitalism back on its feet after the shock of war, to construct the atom bomb, embark on the cold war and Nato, conduct colonial wars in Malaya or imprison Nkrumah, or undertake a fantastically impossible re-armament programme, provided the basis for Toryism to float back on a wave of mass disillusionment and enter on a glorious spending spree ('set the people free'). Now capitalism is sick again, and a Labour Government will have the task, according to the capitalist viewpoint, to call on the workers, more successfully than the Tories can, to make the necessary sacrifices, so that Toryism can return to power on the basis of the resultant disillusionment and have another bout. Some young writers, who never had any experience of the Labour Government of 1945-51, have written a book about it under the title *Age of Austerity*. The book has of course received infinite reviewing space in the press, in marked contrast to the very considerable degree of silence accorded to the informed and authoritative study by D. N. Pritt, *The Labour Government*. But the interesting point is the title of this other work which reveals the main impression left on these young people by their diligent newspaper researches about the Third Labour Government. Crossman, reviewing this book, writes:

> Certainly Mr. Attlee can take most of the credit for making possible the economic recovery which was frittered away in the course of the Tory decade.

Do we really want to go through all this again?

Practical Conclusions

There are some practical conclusions to be drawn by all serious socialists and fighters in the labour movement. First, if we do not

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want the Fourth Labour Government to repeat the unhappy experience of the Third, the time to see to that is now. Second the tactical conception of many on the left, as shown at Scarborough, to keep mum and raise no controversial issue of policy for fear of weakening electoral unity and the chance of electoral victory, is not only mistaken tactically (the right wing observe no truce, but merely takes advantage of the non-resistance of the left to put over their policy as a unanimous policy), but actually a menace to the future of the labour movement, to the effectiveness of a future Labour Government, and even to the immediate objective of Labour victory. Surrender of the fight for the most effective policy of a Labour Government such as could serve the interests of the working people, supposedly in the name of unity for electoral victory, could result also in losing the electoral victory. The two sides of the fight are inextricably united. Third, the battle of those on the left, including the Communist Party, who consider it necessary to combine the fight for the defeat of Toryism with the fight for a real change of policy from Toryism (voiced by the Communist candidates in the election, and of significance for the labour fight in all the constituencies), and for this purpose to strengthen the organisation of the left, represented by the Communist Party and the *Daily Worker*, corresponds to the true interests of the labour movement, and is of vital importance, not only for the character of a future Labour Government, but also for the aim of a mass electoral victory over Toryism. This is not a question of rocking the boat. It is a question of giving the boat more motive power and a sense of direction.

R.P.D.

A LETTER has come to the offices of *Labour Monthly*, smuggled out from the Aigina Prison in Greece. It reads:

For 19 years we have celebrated the occasion of the great Antifascist Victory with our hands chained. We are still in prison for our activities against the fascist invaders, for our participation in the National Resistance, for our ideas. . . In spite of the outcry from world public opinion and the continuous struggle of our people, the Government still refuses to end its policy of trying to exterminate us politically and physically, a policy which only recently resulted in the death of five of our comrades. . . We write to thank you for your warm solidarity and to wish you new successes in the struggle for democracy and peace.

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Problems of Trade Unionism in the Sixties

A CHARTER FOR WOMEN

John E. Newton

Secretary, National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers

[*Our Industrial Correspondent writes: Few people carry greater authority on the subject of the new Industrial Charter for Women than Mr. Newton. A member of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, he has served on its National Women's Advisory Committee for ten years, his union having a higher percentage of women members than any other represented upon it. No less than 94,000, or over 81 per cent of his 115,100 members are women. 'Tailors & Garment' started the movement for the 'Women's Charter' when they put down a successful motion at the T.U.C.'s Conference of Unions catering for women workers in April 1962, demanding an industrial charter for women workers. The T.U.C. therefore prepared a Charter of Six Points:*

1. *Equal pay based on the value of the job, not the sex of the worker;*
2. *Opportunities for promotion;*
3. *More apprenticeships for girls;*
4. *Improved opportunities for training;*
5. *Re-training for older women returning to industry;*
6. *Special provisions for health and welfare.*

Unanimously accepted at the 'Women's Conference' in April this year, it was endorsed five months later at the Brighton Trades Union Congress in September.]

ALTHOUGH 43 countries have already ratified Convention 100 of the International Labour Office on equal pay, every Tory Government since 1951 has refused to do so; their excuse last year being that they had to wait to know what the obligations would be if Britain entered the Common Market. On this and on other I.L.O. issues their defence has usually taken the form of special pleading. Time and again the Trades Union Congress have therefore pressed the Government to give a lead by applying equal pay in their own industrial establishments; to no avail.

The speaker for the National Executive Committee at the Labour Party Conference last month, replying to the discussion on the resolution on equal pay, appeared to have this in mind when he said that to call upon a future Labour Government to introduce legislation within a specified time would take them further than

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ever before. The N.E.C., however, accepted the motion, and if returned to power, a Labour Government would seek at an appropriate stage in their first term of office to consider ways and means of implementing it. Whilst the meaning of this statement is not clear, the resolution* which was carried unanimously was quite specific in that it called upon the next Labour Government to ratify Convention 100 of the I.L.O. on equal pay for work of equal value, and by legislative initiative to facilitate the achievement of this objective throughout industry and commerce within a specified period. The policy on equal pay, a principal objective of the trade union movement, by constant repetition over the years was in danger of becoming a slogan rather than a maxim. I do not think it is too much to claim that the establishment of the Industrial Charter for Women has been the means of lifting it from this dangerous position.

Undoubtedly when the Charter was promulgated by the T.U.C. 'Women's Conference' this April it was the most important step taken for many years in the promotion and co-ordination of the industrial rights of women. Framed to meet the needs of all unions with women members affiliated to the T.U.C., it had of necessity to embody those principles which were common to all of them. Yet it is not so much the words of the Six Points as the spirit and intention behind them that are important; and the fact that for practically the first time a co-ordinated policy was formulated. Its effect was quickly seen at a number of trade union conferences, and in the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions' Annual Meeting, as well as in the T.U.C. itself, and finally at the Labour Party Conference.

The importance of women's work goes largely unrecognised. Women are given little formal training. They are largely confined to occupations classified as women's work, often a device for avoiding payment of the rate for the job. This practice is more widespread than is generally recognised. Even in countries which claim to have established the principle of equal pay, often women are found working in departments where no men, or very few, are employed, on the lowest rates in the industrial wages schedule.

But why is a Women's Charter necessary? The answer is that there are more than eight million women employed in Britain today. Two in five women and girls above school-leaving age now go out to work, in occupations covering about a sixth of industry. In many

*This Conference calls upon the next Labour Government to ratify Convention 100 of the International Labour Organisation on equal pay for work of equal value and by legislative initiative to facilitate the achievement of this objective throughout industry and commerce within a specified period. (Resolution moved by the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.)

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industries approximately half the women employed are married. This places a dual responsibility on them; they must somehow look after the home and also contribute to the family exchequer. Whether they are obliged to do this or not—and the majority of them work because they need the money—it is a plain fact that many industries could hardly continue without married women workers. Women now make an essential contribution to British industry and the work of the nation. Without women there would be little or no clothing production. The nursing profession would cease to exist. Their domestic contribution is incalculable and by that they contribute to the work performed by their men folk. They nurse and feed the nation. Their commercial value is demonstrated by the demand for their services. Not only are they engaged in the main production services, but also in many of the ancillary occupations without which the final product would be useless.

Women will become an even more indispensable part of the labour force as the population becomes bigger in the next few years, with growing numbers of children and older people unable to contribute to the increasing production requirements of the nation, necessitated by having to import more of the things we cannot produce ourselves, particularly food. This very fact of women's indispensability will entitle them to their rightful share of the national product. Indeed, they have reached that stage now; but unfortunately as yet women do not recognise their own industrial and economic potentiality. That is another reason why a Women's Charter is needed.

That they are now an indispensable part of the total national labour force makes nonsense of the claim that women regard employment as a temporary expedient. But what is quite a different matter is the fact that a woman's employment will be interrupted by child-bearing. Today it is essential to make such arrangements as will allow her to make her feminine contribution to the family. What is needed, for example, is to recognise immediately the principle of the shortest working week, providing her with adequate time to attend to her domestic duties and ensure that her children are not deprived of care and attention. If she wishes to work there are enough labour-saving devices nowadays to curtail the domestic humdrum of former days and allow free time; they should be made available on terms which women workers can afford. There should also be considerable increase in domestic help through the services of women especially suited to this occupation, paid at wages which

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will induce them to take up this work. Equal pay, a planned policy of employment and proper facilities for the care of children would provide thousands of women with the opportunity not only to lead a fuller life but to make the maximum contribution to the increased standard of living which can only be achieved in a country the size of Britain by utilising every source of man-power and woman-power.

Foremost in the Six Points is the question of wages. The average earnings of women, particularly in manufacturing industries, are little more than half those of men. Last year the Trades Union Congress adopted a resolution that where equal pay did not yet apply, the principle of equal wage increases for men and women would help to reduce the gap. The last increase of wages in the engineering industry provided the same cash increases for women as unskilled men. The National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers has pursued this policy for a number of years, and has recently negotiated a wage increase of 4d. per hour on the minimum rates for men and women, and 2½d. per hour irrespective of earnings. But in a period of full employment other factors operate at district and branch levels which tend to act against this method. Some general legislation is therefore needed if equal pay is to be realised in the foreseeable future.

Facilities for training women and girls and re-training the older women who return after raising their family, are generally speaking, completely inadequate. Less than one in fourteen girls is apprenticed to a skilled trade and only 15 to 20 per cent, on leaving school, receive systematic training for a year or longer. This is an extremely shortsighted policy. It wastes the nation's resources. It reduces opportunities for promotion and would account for *any lack of interest of young girls in permanent* employment prospects.

Thanks to trade union endeavour women are not sweated and exploited to the degree they were fifty years or more ago. They are, however, still often greatly exploited. Confined to certain categories of work and making up a large proportion on the lowest incomes group, only about 25 per cent are organised in trade unions. It may be claimed that women have the same rights as men to exercise their power through the ballot box; but it is a long way from the ballot box to the statute book. The real opportunity is there if they will take it; fully organised in trade unions their case would be irresistible. Trade unions are just as necessary for women as for men; indeed more so. The adoption of the Industrial Charter for Women would bring this home, not only to the women but to their men folk and all trade unionists.

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A NEW CLIMATE?

Ivor Montagu

THE partial test ban treaty negotiated by Great Britain, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. this summer represents, at last, 'an important step'.* In what respects important? One respect is obvious. It halts, at least for the time being, direct pollution—and harm to the present and to future generations—through the stopping of nuclear bomb test explosions in the air, on land and at sea. It does not stop all pollution because, of course, fall-out poison resulting from underground tests (not forbidden in the treaty) seeps through the ground. But the direct, immediate pollution is anyway much less. But this respect is not the most vital. The most important is that the treaty marks a change in climate from which it should be possible to move to further agreements. A change in which the peace movement should have vastly greater opportunities.

What do we mean by a change of climate? Has the imperialist tiger changed its stripes? Has its appetite diminished? Has the vicious ruthlessness of the American brass been tempered? Has Kennedy been suddenly transformed from a shrewd captain of American capitalism to a progressive saint? Certainly not. It is not necessary to assume such impossibilities to recognise that the partial test ban, whilst it does not altogether stop tests, contains escape clauses and is in itself not even a disarmament measure, yet marks a qualitatively new situation in the world. In what is this new? Because *it marks the first concrete agreement in this field.* It is not the result of any change of character or heart (heartlessness) on the part of the war forces of imperialism, but the registration by certain sections amidst their ranks of a new situation. It is the culmination of a long military development in which the socialist sector has become strong enough to be incapable of conquest by military force. The newly sovereign, ex-colonial (however neo-colonially entangled) sector has grown so numerous as increasingly to isolate the imperialist governments and the peace forces and progressive forces, within the imperialist countries themselves, have become more and more influential in demands of their governments that require at least positive gestures toward peace.

Human memories are often unfortunately short. Our span of life is too limited, our activities and best efforts too concentrated on

*The precise description used by Professor J. D. Bernal, F.R.S., in his declaration as Chairman of the Presidential Committee of the World Council of Peace welcoming the treaty.

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the present, for us always sufficiently to realise the changes in the climates that we live through. But it is not necessary to make comparison between such hills and valleys as the formal slight détente and trivially increased politeness of this present autumn, compared to the peak crisis of the brink of world war and man destruction over Cuba, but a twelvemonth back. There is a larger-term and still more significant difference to be noted: that between the long years in which peace was a dirty word, negotiation of every kind was anathema, agreements unthinkable because the outlaw socialist world 'could not be trusted', and the cold war at its height sought to erect walls and create divisions of which reality has forced the breaking and the bridging, and the present time. Now every Western statesman who hopes for re-election must say (and some of the more intelligent among them even mean it) that the time is come to press on with new agreements and not to let the (small) beginning of the Moscow Partial Test Ban Treaty grow cold, but make progress however gradual.

It is this situation of which the peace forces must take advantage to make new gains. To say this does not mean in the slightest degree to see the world through rose-tinted spectacles, or close our eyes to ugly facts. Indeed, to achieve success we must be fully conscious of the continued evil character of our opponents. We must be aware of their continuing influence and power and unabandoned bellicose ambitions, of their unabated, active and actual, naked aggressions even today, and of the Himalayan magnitude of the obstacles that lie ahead. Indeed, about all this it is precisely necessary that we cherish no illusions whatever. The realities of the changed military balance between U.S.A. and subordinates on the one hand and U.S.S.R. on the other, conditioned by Soviet progress in the missile field; the increasing appearance and activity on the world stage of the ex-colonial forces, and increasing—however still limited—enlightenment of the peoples of the bemused and intellectually captive West, are the background to this first agreement. But they must not and will not make us overlook the U.S. mounted embargoes and increasing pressure against Cuba, the almost daily attacks against its soil launched under the aegis of the U.S. military and the almost daily statements by responsible U.S. statesmen insisting on the overthrow and destruction of the Cuban revolution. We cannot overlook the U.S. 'undeclared war' in Vietnam, its subsidies and military assistance which keep alive a conscienceless, corrupt and cruel regime rejected by every section of the

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Vietnamese people, in a totally unjust and immoral intervention thousands of miles from American shores. The fact must not be forgotten that France, which refuses to adhere to the Test Ban Treaty and parades its planning of new tests (not of course on French soil but in Africa and in the Pacific) and its partnership in nuclear weapon development with the West German military, is retained as a Nato ally and a partner of the lily-white U.S. and British signatories of the Moscow Treaty. Nor must it be forgotten that the 'essential keystone' of the Nato set-up, indispensable to U.S. 'defence' plans, is the revenge-seeking, Nazi-dominated, Hitler-general-led regime in West Germany, which makes no secret of its determination to redraw the map of Europe by filching territory from half a dozen neighbours and forcibly incorporating the German Democratic Republic. It is a programme for war that West Germany's Nato allies keep open by refusing to recognise the German Democratic Republic and its frontiers. They pander to every Bonn aspiration for military reinforcement from larger submarines to finger practice on nuclear triggers in the mixed-manned nuclear force, and accepting the Bonn veto on any European military disengagement. We must remember that the Portuguese fascist colonial regime in Africa, the racialist South Rhodesian government and the apartheid monstrosity in South Africa persist only because they are supported economically, militarily and politically by the allies of the U.S. and, equivocally veiled but effective behind these, by the U.S. master. And above all there is the insane, insensate ostracism of China, the exclusion of the representatives of one fourth of humanity from world negotiation and world organisation, the occupation and maintenance of grotesque puppetry on Chinese islands, maintained with increasing difficulty and obscenity by the United States. In all this, and in much more, there is not the slightest doubt that the forces for war remain powerful, gigantic and headed by the United States.

But who doubts it? No-one. The point is that the objective situation, including the forces of peace, has been powerful enough to impose a first agreement, a first halt, a first step away from the direction in which they desire to travel precisely upon these forces headed by the United States. Over 100 countries have adhered to the partial test-ban treaty—an indication of the strength and universality of the forces ready to welcome any step to peace and from war, which will not be lost to attention. Differing from this attitude stand three objections, all disadvantageous to further progress to-

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ward the goal the peoples desire. On the first, that nothing at all has happened, we need waste no time. This is the pretext given by the Labour Party Conference managers for not discussing foreign affairs and, as everyone knows, is the result not of honest calculation but simply of a misconceived alliance between left wing, rightly anxious to defeat the Tories and believing a fatuous silence necessary for electoral victory, and right wing, more intelligently believing such silence will give it a freer hand to double-cross after the election. Of the second, that the agreement, however welcome, is trivial, we need only remark that it comes from absolutist circles within pacifist ranks who use sentimentalist penny-in-the-slot reactions to save the burden of reflective analysis. The third stems from China. It is perfectly natural and comprehensible that the Chinese Government and people should have a particular attitude to the test-ban treaty. De Gaulle's objections to the treaty are inexcusable. Nobody threatens France, least of all with nuclear weapons, and its only military danger can come precisely from the West German militarist revenge circles with whom de Gaulle is plotting a partnership in nuclear weapons development. But China is in an entirely different situation. National territory—Taiwan and other adjacent islands—is occupied by an imperialist power (the U.S.) which actually stations nuclear weapons on this very territory and threatens China with them by land and sea based rockets and from the air. At the same time they decline every proposal to discuss Chinese proposals for negotiation of the Pacific as a nuclear-free zone. It is perfectly natural that China should regard this situation as unsatisfactory. Peace supporters in such countries as Britain and U.S.A., if they wish China to take a less narrow view of the treaty should ask themselves, in the first place, what they are doing to help restore China's territory of Taiwan and remove from this region the U.S. nuclear threat.

Nevertheless it is difficult to understand the Chinese all-out opposition to the treaty and particularly to accept as reasonable the grounds on which this seems to be founded. The placing on a level of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. as nuclear monopolists does not fit, since the Soviet Union is a pledged ally ready to partner China against nuclear attack and its nuclear power has already sufficed to keep Cuba free till now of the all-out invasion that U.S. hotheads would certainly otherwise have launched months ago. The allegation that the treaty favours U.S.A. and is some sort of surrender to it, fails to fit because the evidence cited is totally misleading. True that the

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U.S. government spokesmen in Congress declared it does, but can it be expected that they would commend the treaty for Senate approval on the ground that it is a disadvantage to them? True that the treaty does not ban underground test explosions, which Soviet negotiators used to say was essential, but the fact is, this is no disadvantage *now* to the U.S.S.R. If anything it is the reverse. The last series of tests—heavy weapons in atmosphere—showed the Soviet Union far in advance in this field by its superior rocketry power. It is indeed this fact that has ended forever the imperialist post-war dream of conquering the Socialist countries by nuclear war or nuclear blackmail. It made possible the discontinuance of the weapon race in this type, and the treaty makes it sure that U.S. will never catch up, let alone surpass in this respect. Where U.S. has any advantage, if it has, is in stockpile and in small weapons such as can be tried out underground. In this field the treaty leaves U.S.S.R. free to continue if it should so wish, though it is little surprise that it has not attempted underground tests, as the whole theory of limited nuclear war—for which these small weapons are supposed to be adopted—is made nonsense by the inevitability of retaliation. The U.S. tests in this field are much more to keep the arms merchants happy and the senate critics quiet than for any direct military usefulness.

But most misplaced of all seems to be the contention emanating from China that the treaty will deceive the peoples, lulling them into a false sense of security and making the peace movement relax. Who, anywhere, of the millions who welcome this treaty as a 'first step' overestimate it as anything more? But *as a first step* it cannot be overvalued, and the reaction of the peace movement is and will be utterly different. Everyone with wide experience in the peace movement knows that the problem in many countries is not to arouse people to the danger of war and the need for peace but to give them confidence that anything they do to win peace can possibly be effective in halting the drift to war. 'Yes, yes', the people say to the activists, 'we agree with you, but what can we do? We march, we sign, we vote, we demonstrate but who takes notice?' Now this first step has been achieved it alters the whole climate for the peace movement in this sense. It throws the cold war warriors on the defensive. No longer can they argue that it is impossible to negotiate, to reach agreement, to trust the socialist camp. The whole of their propaganda machine is thrown out of gear. A French proverb says 'L'appetit vient en mangeant'—appetite comes with eating.

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The success of this first step, tiny though it is in itself, is going to reinforce a hundred times the demand for further steps to follow.

There is plenty for us to do and divisions need not and must not hinder us in doing it. As Professor Bernal said in his report to the World Peace Council Presidential Committee meeting at the end of September, it is perfectly possible to hold different evaluations of the treaty and yet to unite in actions absolutely essential to follow it up. We must learn to do this just as we have learnt in the peace movement to have different views of the responsibility for tensions or conflicts in the world different from those expressed earlier in this article for example—and yet unite to halt war and reduce tensions. The partial test ban must be made complete, the French tests must be stopped and a ban achieved on underground tests. The spread of nuclear weapons must be stopped, whether by Polaris, by the multinational nuclear fleet or any other plot. Nuclear-free zones must be established. Concrete steps must be taken towards the elimination of nuclear weapons themselves on the road to general and complete disarmament. The problem of European security must be tackled by a non-aggression pact, measures against surprise attack, the recognition of the fact of the two Germanies pending their eventual joining together, and an end to the pretensions of Bonn. The monstrous war in South Vietnam must stop and the gross intervention must be ended, with restoration of the Geneva agreement. The aggressions and threats against Cuba must be ended. The remains of colonialism must be ended and a stern front be presented against racialism. The relics of the cold war must be ended, world trade be expanded, cultural relations developed. And great China, whose participation is essential for the full effectiveness of every agreement toward disarmament and peace, must be accorded its rightful place in the United Nations despite the folly of the U.S. objectors. This is a wide programme but a pretty generally uniting one. Wide as it is though, the opportunity to fight for it is greater now that the *first step* has brought the movement confidence and undermined the obstructions of the cold war warriors who declared *any* step not only undesirable but impossible.

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THE RUSSIAN MIRACLE

Carrying the documentary technique to the greatest heights this film, made by Annelie and Andrew Thorndike, shows the great transformation from the misery and oppression of Tsarist days to the era in which the new Socialist man goes spinning around the earth in a sputnik. We publish these stills* in celebration of the 46th Anniversary of the Soviet Union.

*These stills were supplied by Plato Films Ltd., 164, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2, the U.K. distributors.

LIFE UNDER THE TSARS: Peasant women yoked like cattle were made to pull barges along the Volga watched by the overseer with his knout.

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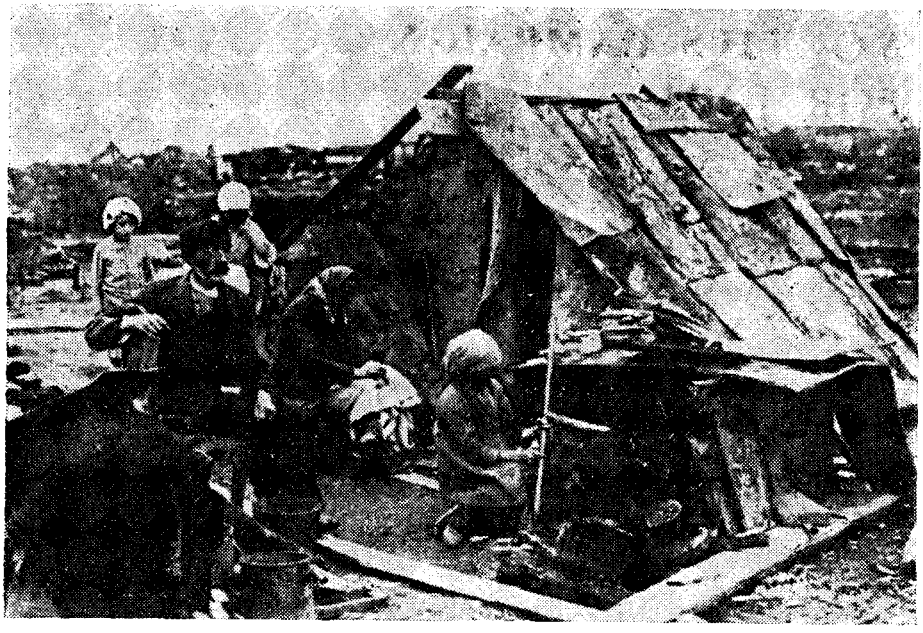

WARS OF INTERVENTION: Homeless citizens of Yaroslavl.

YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE SOVIET UNION TODAY: Planning an even brighter future.

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YOUTH'S CAMPAIGN FOR JOBS

J. Reid

SCIENCE, the technological revolution, 'take Britain into the scientific age', 'train more scientists, technologists, and technicians', this was the theme of Harold Wilson's speech at the Scarborough conference of the Labour Party. As he spoke, 66,762 under eighteen-year-olds were trudging the streets, unemployed. The great majority of the same age group fortunate enough to be in employment were working in dead-end and unskilled jobs. Why is this? Is it because the Tories are such bumbling idiots, such tired old men that they are totally unconcerned about developing an advanced technological industry in Britain, which if it means anything means the training of young people with the skills necessary for modern industry? Anyone who thinks that the Tory leaders are fools only proves that he himself is a fool.

Youth unemployment and the wider problem of the failure to give our young people the opportunities for proper training are aspects of the fundamental contradiction of any declining society, *i.e.*, its inability to develop fully the new techniques of production at its disposal. If monopoly capitalism was able to develop these techniques then it would not be declining but would still be on the ascendancy and the economic conditions for the advance to socialism would not be ripe in this and in many other countries. Everyone knows that the possibilities of producing an abundance of all human needs is within man's grasp. The real problem is how to realise these possibilities. The only solution is to plan production not for profit but for the needs of the people, and this entails ending the rule of the Tories and of the monopolies they directly represent. In other words, socialism is the social system of the scientific and technological age. Socialism, as we see in the Soviet Union, produces limitless opportunities for young people; guarantees them the jobs, training facilities, and openings to the professions that enables them to develop their skills and talents to the full. However, much as we need to propagate among young people that socialism is the basic solution to all their problems, it cannot be left there.

Today in Britain there are tens of thousands of young people who cannot find a job. It does not help them a great deal in their immediate predicament to tell them that in a socialist Britain they would not be faced with this problem. The plain truth is that even

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the most raving 'the revolution is round the corner' optimist would concede that a genuine working class and socialist government is not imminent in the months that lie ahead whatever the outcome of the next general election. Therefore, alongside the presentation of the socialist alternative must go the fight to compel the government to adopt a programme for emergency action now, that would guarantee for these young people the right to employment and training. Such a programme would include the taking over by the government of vacant factories and other suitable buildings to be used as emergency industrial training centres for youth, and the young people involved to receive government grants equal to apprentice wages; legislation rushed through Parliament to compel employers to take their full quota of apprentices and junior workers; instruction to nationalised industries to increase their intake of apprentices and young workers and discussion with local authorities to encourage them to do likewise. These and other measures would go a long way to resolving the immediate problem.

The response of sections of the trade unions and labour movement to the plight of youth unemployment has been good. But there is not enough anger at what the Tories and their class are doing to these young people. The Tories present the position in roughly these terms: the cause of the trouble is the bulge, the increase in the birth-rate in the immediate post-war years. This means that there are simply too many young people. Apart from the obvious answer, that any sane society would welcome the revitalising effect of eager young hands and minds entering the labour force, this approach reveals the ruling-class mentality and attitude towards working-class youth. In effect what they are saying is 'this is a crisis of overproduction, the supply exceeds the demands'. You would think that they were dealing with commodities like pots and pans instead of young human beings. Of course this is in fact their concept of the sons and daughters of working people. They are seen as profit fodder that is fed into their capitalist industrial machine at one end, as from the other end go the older workers from whom all profit has been squeezed.

What happens to the surplus youth? The same as happens to other surplus commodities; dump them, throw them on to the scrap heap, or keep them in storage (if the price of storage is not too high), for you might have some use for them next year or some time in the future. That is precisely what they are doing to these young people. The price of storage is not only cheap, it is free. There are

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38,126 school-leavers still without a job, and as they have not had the opportunity to work, they have no national insurance stamps nor consequently any unemployment benefit. Our trade union and labour movement should explode with anger at this treatment of our young people. As well as anger we need action by the organised working class supporting the struggle of youth on this issue. The young people are already engaged in the struggle. Among them there is no feeling of fatalistic acceptance of unemployment, or tendencies to despair. On the contrary they are fighting back. They have demonstrated, marched, lobbied the T.U.C., organised conferences in various parts of the country, formed committees to lead and organise the struggle. Unity between Young Communists, Young Socialists, Christian Youth, young trade unionists, employed and unemployed youth has been forged in this campaign. Trade union district committees and branches, shop stewards' committees, Labour Party and Communist Party branches have sent delegates to conferences and meetings organised by the youth and have pledged their support for the campaign. It is worth noting that the employed youth are as active on this question as those without jobs.

Such developments should not surprise anyone, for the generation that refuses to accept that war is inevitable, has marched at Aldermaston and is fighting to change the cold war nuclear policies of the government, was hardly likely to accept unemployment as inevitable.

The next stage in the fight is the lobby of parliament called on November 12 by the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers' youth committee in London. The youth committees in various parts of the country have taken up this call and see it as a national lobby where all the local activities and support can be brought together on a countrywide basis. Local petitions have been produced, signatures and money are being collected, coaches have been booked, train seats reserved. However, this is not a matter only for the young people. Every section of the working-class movement has a responsibility and a duty to play its part in this struggle. A start could be made by sending a delegate to the lobby and giving money to help send a young unemployed worker. What is really needed is for our labour movement to emerge as the champion of youth's rights to a decent job with opportunities for training and acquiring skills. Such a stand would not only prove decisive in winning this immediate battle against youth unemployment, but could start a process where thousands of splendid youth in Britain would see the labour movement as their own and be won to its banner.

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ACCIDENTS, OR CRIMES ?

O. H. Parsons

THE very high figures of reported accidents in premises covered by the Factories Acts, and particularly the alarming rise in the figures for the construction industry, are matters of the deepest concern. Whilst we welcome the fact that the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1962 shows a decrease in the overall number of reported accidents from 192,517 (669 fatal) in 1961 to 190,158 (668 fatal) in 1962, this improvement has been offset by a rise in building and civil engineering of 8·5 per cent, from 23,356 (264 fatal) in 1961 to 25,338 (281 fatal) in 1962. It is particularly shocking that this high level of accidents should be occurring in industries which are the subject of a very strict safety code. The Factories Act itself, and even more, the detailed Regulations in respect of particular industries (particularly building and construction) contain safety requirements and provisions which, if obeyed, would prevent the very great majority of accidents.

The brutal fact is that these statutory requirements are very widely ignored and such breaches largely go unpunished. This allegation of widespread illegalities by employers coupled with a *laissez faire* attitude by the authorities to such criminal activities is a grave one. It is not made irresponsibly.

Take one instance blithely referred to by the Report itself. Section 80 of the Factories Act, 1961, requires all accidents involving disablement for more than three days to be reported to the Factory Inspector. The Chief Inspector made a special survey, in co-operation with the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance, and this survey 'revealed that about two out of every five reportable accidents occurring in factories and more than half of such accidents on construction sites had not been notified to H.M. Factory Inspectorate as required by the Act'. Mass breaches of the Act; some 60,000 unreported accidents in factories, some 12,500 in construction. Yet what do we find? That there were 65 firms or persons (compared with 78 in 1961) prosecuted for failing to report accidents: sixty-five out of the thousands of firms who were breaking the law and could, without undue difficulty, be traced and brought to book.

Section 14 of the Act lays down very strict requirements with regard to fencing dangerous machinery. There were 24,369 accidents (81 fatal) in factories due to 'machinery in motion under

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power' mostly caused by breaches of this Section. Do we find 24,369 prosecutions? Indeed we do not; the total prosecutions for failure to guard dangerous machinery came to the magnificent total of 486. One could produce many examples of this mass breaking of the law with singularly little official response. For all factories, docks, shipbuilding, iron and steel foundries and building and construction works there were a total of 1,695 prosecutions for all classes of offence, health, safety, welfare, employment, the lot. And a total of £38,758 in fines. What a complete travesty of justice! What an absolute breakdown of law enforcement!

The primary cause of this anarchy, this general condoning of illegality, lies in the inadequacy of the Factory Inspectorate. This department are the police force of industrial safety. Their job is to secure the enforcement of the Factories Act and Regulations under it, and there is a total staff of 477 inspectors to carry out this vital work costing £1,289,815. That is all the Tory Government sees fit to spend on enforcing industrial safety and saving the lives and limbs of those in industry.

The Inspectorate is grossly overworked. On an average, each inspector has under his control 451 factories, 5 docks and 13 warehouses, and in 1962 made 358 visits to factories, 63 to building and civil engineering sites, 7 to ships and 12 to other places under the Act as well as 77 other official visits. It is scarcely surprising, and no one would seek to cast any blame on the Inspectors themselves, if this understaffed organisation fails to perform its law-enforcement functions efficiently.

For the qualifications required and the responsibility of the job, the Inspectorate is underpaid. A new entrant normally must be at least 21 and have a university degree and preferably have practical experience in industry. For this, he is paid on entry between £714 and £930 (plus London rate of £55) a year, depending on age. He must stay on that basic scale, raising to a maximum of £1,221 a year, for at least 5 years. Then, if he passes a qualifying examination, he rises to the level of general inspector with a salary range of £1,337 to £1,923 (plus London rate of £65) a year. That, in the absence of special qualification and promotion to special posts, is his limit. Compared with what people of such qualifications could expect in industry or commerce, these rates are those of a sweated trade.

There are many things necessary if the present slaughter in industry is to be reduced; education, training, active workers' participa-

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tion. But the most crucial is that the law should be taken seriously, that employers should realise that if they break the law they will be found out and prosecuted; and the first effective step to secure this is a dramatic increase in the police force of industrial safety by a really substantial expansion of the Factory Inspectorate and a raising of their finacial status. Until the problem of industrial accidents is treated as a national disaster calling for a crash programme to remedy it, the present cynical disregard of the law will continue and the present mass slaughter will go on.

FORTY YEARS AGO

Soviet Russia has struggled long and vainly for recognition as a State. Because she proved herself too strong to be overthrown, it was necessary to suffer her existence, but no more. The States of Europe and America, from the great Powers to the tiniest neutralised zone, adopted a policy of neglect and oblivion, such as in good bourgeois families meets the undesired presence of an illegitimate child. Diplomatic relations being withheld, the young State turned next towards trade and commerce. . . . But there is still another avenue to public approbation and esteem, and that is by the royal road of Art. Till now, this has been closed to the Government of Workers and Peasants, for reasons both internal and external. A nation fighting civil war, invasion, blockades, and famine has little chance to cultivate the fine arts, much less to disseminate them in the outer world. And the hundreds of thousands of Russian refugees who inundated Europe after the November revolution of 1917 contained a goodly number of intellectuals and artists who have been devoting all their talents to earn a living in exile. . . . A little band of faithful believers remained to carry through the revolution in the field of art as well as in politics and social life. The struggle of these true artists is written in blood and tears, for they, too, were soldiers of the New Order. Here is not the time to chronicle their triumphs and defeats, their enormous faith and sacrifices, which enabled Revolutionary Russia of the Soviets to maintain and to create a literature, drama, and the opera for the relaxation and heartening of the fighting workers and peasants, while Denikin Kolchak, and Yudenitch were hammering at the very gates of Petrograd and Moscow. Those who have seen the flaming beauty of Russian opera, which is Russian history embodied and ensouled, and heard the haunting and melancholy magnificence of Russian music in those dark days—who have sat in momentary forgetfulness before the delicate dramas where Russian life was unfolded and interpreted with delicate and consummate genius—they alone can speak of the part which Russian art and culture played in the winning of the five-year battle fronts.

(From 'Polikushka', a review by E.R., *Labour Monthly*, November, 1923.)

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WHY THE ROCHDALE PLAN?

Jack Dash
Chairman, Royal Docks Liaison Committee

THE shipping and docks employers, having seen the advantages the Road Haulage Companies, monopoly industry in general, and the land speculators will get from the 'Beeching Plan for Railways', now want their pound of flesh. They welcome with a few moderate modifications the Government's endorsement of the Rochdale Committee's speed-up recommendations for Britain's ports. The Committee, which was set up in 1961, makes a number of sweeping proposals, including the setting up of a 'National Port Authority' to supervise the national development of the dock industry, concentration of control, changes in expansion policy; all these proposals hinge upon a more intensive use of a smaller labour force in dockland with increased mobility, mechanisation and shift-work, and it is these proposals that are the basis of portworkers' suspicions and fears.

It is very significant that of all the many proposals in the Rochdale report, the employers focussed on the report's approval of their draft proposals for a so-called decasualisation scheme. Under the guise of seeking an end to unemployment and casual labour in the industry, the employers are trying to get the portworkers to accept intensive speed up, removal of all protective practices, round the clock working and complete mobility of labour. But the increased productivity accruing from all this is to go—apart from the raising of 'fall back' (unemployment) pay to the low basic rate of wages—to the employers.

These proposals would set the industry back for fifty years. Far from bringing decasualisation it would open the door to a 'victimisation pool' of the older workers, the less strong, the militant trade unionist, who could be kept on 'fall back' pay as the employers desired, until they became too old for the industry or left it through economic pressure.

The proposal to reduce drastically the number of employers, concentrating the existing 400 or over in the Port of London, for example, to two or three hundred, and giving them greater control of the allocation of labour, combined with large-scale mechanisation, could mean a halving of the present labour force over a period of a few years. In this way, increased exploitation would pay for the cost of the Rochdale expansion proposals while simultaneously

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providing higher profits and reshaping the industry to meet the challenge of competition it would have to face from the 'common market' countries, if and when we enter the 'common market'. The government has not given up this idea, nor as yet have the Labour Party clearly reached a decision.

What is the attitude of the portworkers to changes within the industry? Are we Luddite minded? On the contrary, we would welcome any progressive change that would in our opinion put the industry on a healthier basis benefiting all. But to obtain this, the advice and opinions of those who work in the industry, the rank and file docker, stevedore, clerk, lighterman and tugman, the people with the practical experience, would have to be considered. Further to this, we ask ourselves why the setting up of a new authority? Has the 'National Dock Labour Board' failed in its purpose? Set up during the war years to bring about a speedy turn-round of shipping, it became a permanent scheme under government legislation in 1947 because of its success. Under this scheme we have enjoyed greater benefits and the employers greater profits. Both the employers and the Rochdale Committee say that the dockers will cling to their deep-rooted fears of unemployment, and in order to allay our fears go on to guarantee that there will be no redundancy. Who are they kidding? What confidence trick are they trying to sell? Haven't we been over 'the same course with the same horse'? We have long memories. The introduction of a mechanisation shed using fork-lifting trucks, some few years back in the Royal Albert Docks, where approximately seven gangs of men were employed (eight men to a gang, fifty-six in all) brought about a reduction to two gangs of three. What happened to the fifty? Its quite true they never lost their Port Registration, but they were forced to compete for work at other firms. At the same time, the general cargo rate of payment of 3s. per ton to the men, was reduced at the mechanisation shed to 1s. 6d. per ton! Was there any corresponding reduction of shipping charges to the port users?

As a result of dock gate meetings held by the 'Royal Docks Liaison Committee' and leaflet distributions explaining the employers' aims and objectives, a mass meeting was convened at the Public Hall, Canning Town, where the 'New Dockers' Charter' was proposed, discussed and unanimously accepted. The points set out in the Charter are as follows:

1. The National Dock Labour Board to maintain full control, i.e. Contractors of Labour, Discipline, Social Welfare. Present strength of

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the register to remain; no cutting in the manning scales. Weekly worker register to be frozen. No make-up of wastage.

2. All unregistered Ports to be governed by the scheme.
3. £15 fall-back guarantee. Each day to remain on its own; no devaluation; no disentitlement on failure to prove.
4. 40-hour five-day week. One call a day.
5. Overtime payment to be excluded from fall-back guarantee.
6. Upward revision of all piece-work rates.
7. Sickness and accident pay.
8. Retiring pension £4 a week. Retiring age at National Insurance level.
9. Three weeks' holiday. Free, or reduced transport fares on all shipping.
10. The trade unions to enforce a 'No soliciting for work' rule.
11. Nationalisation of the industry.

There is growing support for these proposals and in port after port the 'decasualisation' scheme has been rejected. In the long run of course only a nationalised ports industry, democratically run on behalf of the people, can give the portworkers full employment with a rising standard of living and the country a modern, efficient ports industry, meeting the trading needs of a country prosperous, at peace, trading with all and building its socialist future.

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VIETNAM: U.S. GUILT AND DILEMMA

Hilda Vernon

THE prolonged crisis of the U.S.-Diemist regime in South Vietnam is severely threatening its already unstable foundation. In Washington it has raised the question: Would there be a better prospect of winning the war there if a substitute were found for the ruling Ngo family with Ngo dinh Diem as president?

President Kennedy himself well recognises the risk that the collapse of Diem would bring with it the collapse of American policy to maintain South Vietnam as the bridgehead for their further imperialist inroads into Asia, alongside the positions they are managing to maintain in neighbouring Laos. 'I do not agree with those who say we should withdraw. That would be a great mistake . . . this is a very important struggle even though it is far away', and the U.S. must 'have a hand in the defence of Asia' (television interview September 2). In a further television interview on September 9, President Kennedy said the United States is

> faced with the problem of wanting to protect the area against the Communists. That produces a kind of ambivalence in our efforts which exposes us to some critcism. . . . If you reduce your aid, it is possible you could have some effect upon the government structure there. On the other hand you might have a situation which could bring about a collapse.

Militarily the U.S.-Diem forces have not been doing at all well. Despite the overwhelming superiority of armament and means of transport and communication poured in by the U.S.A., time and again the People's Forces, with the primitive weapons fashioned by themselves, have inflicted defeats on the enemy. Increasingly, with captured American arms, they are bringing down their helicopters, driving them out of their strong-points and destroying 'strategic villages' (designed to isolate the mass of the peasantry from the People's Forces). There is much disaffection in Diem's army, and his American military advisers, as well as Washington officials, have many times complained of the unwillingness of many of Diem's troops to go forth into battle against their countrymen in the cause of 'defeating communism'. So much so, that the now notorious 'Special Force' was created, hand-picked and trained in terrorism and directly financed and run by U.S. agents.

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It was in this situation that a new wave of opposition was sparked off last May by attacks on the Buddhists. Longstanding discrimination against Buddhist institutions in favour of the Roman Catholic minority religion took a new turn when the traditional Buddhist ceremony in Hue City was banned and a peaceful assembly of Buddhist believers fired on, resulting in several dead and many wounded. Attempts by the Buddhist leaders to reach a *modus vivendi* failed since the authorities did not abide by the agreement reached with them. Instead an all-out onslaught was mounted against Buddhist clergy and believers, their pagodas and holy places, which has already claimed many victims and is still in process. Even Western correspondents, who for years have been presenting Diem as a Christian gentleman of integrity and virtue, flanked by his equally virtuous and religious family, recoiled—either in disgust or embarrassment—at a state of affairs which led to the public self-immolation of Buddhists in protest.

However, this attempt by the Diemists to repress the traditional, national religion in favour of a foreign-imposed faith and to create a diversion amongst their opponents by sowing religious strife has misfired. All sections rallied to support the Buddhists, and the ranks of Diem's opponents have become more closely unified. Notwithstanding pious recommendations to be more 'liberal' and even sharp rebukes from their American paymasters, it was quite impossible for the Diemists to change or modify the methods which alone maintain them in power. Whoever heard of a tyrant reforming his ways?

Nor has it so far been possible to replace Diem himself by someone who might look a little better to the South Vietnamese and the world at large, and at the same time be more successful in quelling the determination of the South Vietnamese to free themselves from American neo-colonialism and establish the peace and independence guaranteed under the 1954 Geneva Agreements. For a time speculation centred around Diem's brother, Ngo dinh Nho, and his formidable wife, Tran Le Xuan, as possible replacements. True, as the man responsible for the 'security' of the regime he could be relied on to pursue operations against the people with all possible vigour. Further, he has at his immediate disposal the Special Force, centred in Saigon and other main towns which carried through the measures under the Martial Law of August 20. In the ensuing three weeks alone over 7,000, including hundreds of students and schoolchildren, were arrested, and hundreds killed and

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wounded in attacks on demonstrations, on Buddhist buildings and in a renewed wave of terrorist raids over the countryside. How should Nhu be more acceptable to the people who have already given ample proof that they reject brother Diem?

There is only one alternative to the Diem regime, and that is the leadership developed by the people themselves in the South Vietnam Liberation National Front, embracing all sections, and which has included Buddhist representatives on its leading committee since its inception in December 1960. The range of the Front covers not only the military activities of the People's Defence Forces. Today it controls more than three-quarters of South Vietnam, inhabited by a half of the population, and there is nowhere in the country still under the Diemist administration where the supporters of the Front do not outnumber the Diemists.

In the Liberated Areas 1½ million hectares of arable land have been distributed to the peasants (the total arable land in the whole of South Vietnam is under 2½ million hectares). The Front has established hospital services and schools attended by half a million children. It organises many forms of cultural, social and educational activities, is equipping the villages with radio sets and is able to send accredited Missions to other countries to make known the situation in South Vietnam. A different picture indeed from that built up of a few sporadic guerrilla bands forcing themselves on an unwilling population by terrorism and only needing an extra spurt from the Diemist army and perhaps a few more American troops and dollars to be smashed. The high-powered mission, headed by Defence Secretary McNamara, sent to South Vietnam at the end of September with instructions to carry out investigations 'at all levels, from President Ngo dinh Diem to his main advisers as well as American and Vietnamese senior officers in Saigon and in combat zones', cannot have found much comfort there. Nor can the new U.S. ambassador, Cabot Lodge, who is currently reported as finding himself at loggerheads with the Ngo entourage.

Meantime the Ngos are conducting a publicity campaign designed to convince the world that victory over their opponents is within their grasp and that their regime is benevolent and enjoys the support of the people, though according to Diem 'some nations have been intoxicated by false information on Vietnam's internal situation and the Buddhist question' which he describes as having been created by the Communists in a 'last attempt to achieve victory'.

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When the question of the persecution of the Buddhists was raised at the United Nations General Assembly, despite their immediate differences and difficulties, the United States worked to shield their protégés from the condemnation that seemed certain. In this they were successful, in that instead a United Nations fact-finding mission is to visit South Vietnam. Since this proposal was ostensibly put up by Diem's special representative at the U.N. it is obvious that a process of deception is going to be attempted. Moreover, such action in the name of the United Nations runs counter to the Geneva Agreements, which established the International Control Commission to conduct all investigations in Vietnam of any violations of the Agreements on democratic liberties, military questions, etc.

It is impossible to see any other solution to the situation in South Vietnam, which holds such a grave menace to peace in the whole of Asia, than through implementation of the Geneva Agreements. And the first essential step to this end, as has been stated many times both by the South Vietnam Liberation National Front and the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, is that the U.S.A. should end its war of aggression against the South Vietnamese people and withdraw its troops and war material. That done, the Vietnamese people themselves will be able to solve their problems, and it is their declared intention to fight for the right to do so until victory is theirs.

A PROGRAMME FOR IRELAND

C. Desmond Greaves

DESPITE signs of a revival of interest, Ireland remains very much a *terra incognita* to the British working-class movement. Can it be, one imagines the trade unionist saying in his capacity as tourist, that this place that looks so similar and whose people palpably speak English, can really be politically so different? His first reaction may be to attempt to wreath the Irish picture into the British framework. This does not work. He may now conclude that Ireland is incomprehensible. He will be assisted to that view by all the organs of propaganda available to reaction in Britain whose ruling class has been successful in persuading even politically educated workers that Ireland is of no consequence to them.

An important factor in changing this situation could be the publication in Dublin and Belfast respectively of two notable

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Communist programmes, *Ireland Her Own* (Irish Workers' Party) and *Ireland's Path to Socialism* (Communist Party of Northern Ireland). The fault that these are two separate programmes, instead of one for the whole country, must not be charged to the Irish. Ireland was partitioned by a British Act of Parliament in the year 1920 without any consultation with the Irish people. Two years after a General Election at which 81 per cent of the electorate voted in favour of an independent republic, the system of all-Ireland elections (hundreds of years old) was abandoned. The country was cut arbitrarily into two areas in which the most amateur psephologist could forecast the result and for the first time since before Cromwell there were two Irelands. The shattering of the political and economic unity of the country bequeathed to its parts (then broadly speaking economically complementary) extraordinary intractable problems which it has taken years for the labour and national movement to bring into theoretical perspective.

The all-pervading character of the partition issue is inadequately understood in Britain. Its effects can best be summarised by saying that economically it prevented the industrial north from developing in consort with the agricultural south and thereby condemned each to dependence on British imperialism. Politically it deprived the Irish people of an essential right, namely to decide their own affairs in a single national assembly in which the majority would have the decisive say, while taking due account (as happens in every democratic society) of the position of the minority. The position of the minority was not left for the amicable decision of the Irish nation as a whole; it was lifted out of its purview and decided in London. And to make matters worse, within the area which housed the minority, a section of the majority was made into an artificial minority. By this means not only was the nation disrupted, but the national movement also within the partitioned area.

The whole history of Ireland from that day to this has been a struggle between the popular forces aiming to break free from the straightjacket of partition, and imperialism and its agencies seeking to profit from the division of the nation by imposing and extending a 'neo-colonial' system of exploitation. What the 'neo-colonial' era has meant in Ireland is amply described in the two programmes. Naturally the area which possessed political independence fared best. Even the first post-partition Governments found it necessary to establish an important publicly owned hydro-electrical industry. During the critical thirties when imperialism strove to throw its

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difficulties on the common people, the De Valera government not only fought back bravely but made important advances in which publicly owned industries played a vital part. But the citadel of British influence in the twenty-six counties was never stormed. There were other reasons for this besides the unwillingness of the national bourgeoisie to challenge private property. One of these was the economic and military weakness of a partitioned country. It is all very well to cry coward, but when men have the forces of a major world power sixty miles from their capital city they must take that fact into account. Indeed the significance of the Tory policy of keeping the Irish question at all costs out of British politics can be seen well enough in this context. An alliance between the British working class and the Irish national movement could not only render Ireland secure, but could enormously strengthen the forces of progress in both countries. That alliance was often envisaged but never filled out as a political reality. So today about two thirds of the directors on the boards of Irish banks are directors of British banks also. A section of Irish industry with £12 million assets is under British control, and the savings of the small farmers and businessmen are channelled through the banks into imperial investments while Irishmen emigrate in search of work.

The agricultural system still serves Britain rather than Ireland. Its basis is the large cattle ranch drawing its stock from small and medium farms and exporting to Britain. The failure to deal with the ranching class may be partially explained by the great importance of cattle to external trade. Deprived of the industrial north the twenty-six counties must find something with which to pay for the capital goods required for industrialisation. Cattle exports did that. So the ranchers were spared. Today as the pace of industrialisation quickens, foreign investments are sought. At the same time sections of the national bourgeoisie have 'made their pile' and are more compliant to the wishes of imperialism than in past years. The Workers' Party programme makes suggestions for meeting this situation. For the British reader or the Irishman living in Britain, it is essential to appreciate that his duty is not to blame the Irish bourgeosie for its failure to overcome all the obstacles presented by partition; his duty is to fight against those who put it there.

The situation in the six northeastern counties is more complex and likewise more difficult. This is an 'integral part of the United Kingdom' in which 90 per cent of the taxation is collected by the imperial exchequer, but where British democracy is served notice

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to 'keep out'. The powers of the six-county government are so derisory that it might be said that it possesses no right but that of assent. At first glance its emigration record seems better than that of the twenty-six counties. But the northeast is much more industrial. The effect of mechanisation of agriculture tells less on the unemployment figures.

It is in the towns indeed that the sorry picture shows itself most clearly. The rate of unemployment varies from seven to eleven per cent of the insured population and there is an annual emigration of 11,000. It is significant that as a result of a cunningly designed system of discrimination against the nationalist section of the people included in the northeastern area, emigration counterbalances almost exactly the natural increase of the nationalists while merely reducing political, is to create bitter divisions among the people and protect that of the unionists. The result of discrimination, religious and the interests of imperialism, whose monopolies are steadily eliminating the already weakened locally-owned industries by amalgamations and dismantling. As in the twenty-six counties the banks channel local savings abroad, but the powers of the six-county Government are too restricted to apply the financial controls which exist and can be used in the twenty-six.

As has been indicated the problem of liberating Ireland from imperialist exploitation does not lie in the absence, or even in the weakness, of the anti-imperialist forces, but in the difficulty of uniting them within the framework imposed in 1920 and re-enforced in 1949. One vitally important all-Ireland popular organisation exists, namely the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Its existence is so distasteful to the Unionist Government in Belfast that it refuses to negotiate with its Northern Ireland sub-committee, on the plea that the general headquarters are in Dublin. It makes no such cavils at social or religious organisations with Dublin centres.

This fact indicates that what the Unionists (whose thinking most accurately reflects that of imperialist circles) fear most is the unity of the working class of Ireland and its leadership of a movement for national freedom. But other classes suffer from British domination, the small farmers squeezed off the land by low selling prices for their products and high buying prices for their materials of production; shop-keepers threatened by the advancing chain stores, hire-purchase firms and mobile shops; small manufacturers ruined by cheap imports and intellectuals denied local opportunity.

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Both programmes see the road of advance leading to the establishment of 'progressive governments' with a programme of opposition to imperialism, national independence and satisfaction of the people's needs. But of course though the phrase is the same the powers, perspectives and possibilities of such governments must differ. The twenty-six county perspective is naturally plainer, since there is a sovereign state. The more complex conditions of the six counties, where a progressive government would begin its existence with no powers than those possessed by Stormont, are less easy to answer for. Class attitudes moreover are not exactly parallel in the two parts of the country, for example the national bourgeoisie is more revolutionary in the occupied north than in the politically independent south. These differences will be noted by those who read the two programmes.

Both programmes emphasise the need for the reunification of the country. They envisage its coming about as a result of a fusion of the struggles against imperialism as they develop on the two sides of the border. The conditions under which this will take place can obviously not be laid down in the form of a blueprint, and to some extent the matter will inevitably develop differently in the two areas. The six counties, for example, bear the full force of British legislation from which the twenty-six are protected.

Ireland Her Own stresses a point which British readers should especially take to heart.

> The movement of the British workers for socialism is the natural ally of the Irish movement for unity and independence, since it is the same imperialist forces which oppose their struggle for a better life.

The Irish Workers' Party is one of the few organisations in Ireland bold enough to present that conclusion in the teeth of official Britain's long record of oppression and indifference. It is not a conclusion that will be taken for granted in Ireland. Though all nationalists distinguish between British Imperialism and the British people, few at present expect much from them.

It is up to British socialists and trade unionists to prove that the confidence of their comrades in Dublin is not misplaced. In doing so they will recall that the issue can be presented in reverse. 'The movement of the Irish people for unity and independence is the natural ally of the British workers for a better life'. British workers who want to see socialism in their own country should support the struggle of the Irish people, *in their own interests*.

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The publication of these two pamphlets is probably the most important programmatic development in the Irish labour movement since 1912, and should dispel once and for all the prevalent notion that the 'Irish Question' is something that has not been solved, or cannot be solved. It has been solved. What remains is to put the solution into effect, and the British workers have a vital part to play in solidarity with what is being done in Ireland.

BOOK REVIEWS

Economic Competition Between Capitalism and Socialism

Josef Flek, Lubomir Kruzik, Bedrich Levcik

Publishing House for Political Literature, Prague 1962

484 pp. English price 25s. (from Collet's)

ACCORDING TO THE PUBLISHERS' description on the jacket 'this book is the product of several years of hard work on the part of a closely co-ordinated team which has used creatively much of the work previously done in this field and added to it'. In their Introduction the authors explain that: 'In this book we have sought to study individual aspects of the economic competition between the systems as a whole. . . . The determining force in the competition of the two systems is, of course, the Soviet Union. It was this country which blazed the trail to socialism for humanity and which, therefore, has the most experience. In addition, the Soviet Union from the economic standpoint is also potentially the strongest socialist country. Thus, it is only natural that we have devoted particular attention in this book to the rôle of the Soviet Union'.

It offers a rich mine of factual information about comparative production figures, handled very competently by authors well qualified to deal with the subject and possessing a wide acquaintance with international statistical data and literature; and the data they marshal is used to demonstrate 'that superiority in the rate of economic development is a characteristic feature not only of individual socialist countries but of the socialist system as a whole. At the same time this superiority expresses itself not only in industry, but in agriculture as well, and as a result, in the dynamics of the entire social product'. The comprehensive data used by these Czech authors are set out, not only in numerous tables throughout the book and in a hundred-page statistical appendix, but also in some attractive diagrams in colour. They make use of, and also criticise, recent English and American estimates: in particular, the notorious G. Warren Nutter who maintained (on the basis of some highly dubious estimates) that Soviet industrial growth has been at the 'same average pace as American industrial growth' since 1913. They criticise also the advocates of the so-called 'declining growth curve': 'it is not increasing industrialisation, however—that is, the degree of development of productive forces—which causes this tendency . . . but capitalist production relations, which come into irreconcilable contradiction with the social character of the productive forces'.

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In addition to discussing comparative figures of total production and of individual products, growth both absolute and relative, as well as output *per capita*, there are chapters on comparative living standards, on relation between socialist countries and under-developed countries and on future prospects. Figures are cited to show that, whereas total production in U.S.S.R. in 1960 was 60 per cent of that of U.S.A., and production *per capita* was 51 per cent, by 1970 the equivalent percentages will be between 120 and 130 per cent and between 101 and 111 per cent, assuming an annual growth-rate in U.S.A. of two to three per cent. In other words, Soviet production will have outdistanced American, both absolutely and per head of population, by the end of the present decade.

The introductory chapter summarises the political framework of this economic competition: in particular the idea of peaceful coexistence. If one were in a mind to be critical, one might perhaps say that this is a trifle stereotyped and that too little emphasis is here laid on what is *new* in the present situation ('socialism became a world system' and all that this implies)—although there is an incidental reference, it is true, to the 'change in the balance of power in the world'. There is (on page 18) what is perhaps a rather over-simplified formulation about state monopoly capitalism; and in speaking of rates of growth of total production there is no discussion of price-weights, although the authors are evidently well aware of the problems involved. Although there is a list of the statistical tables in the appendix and a list of statistical references, there is unfortunately no index. The translation into English seems to have been well and clearly done (although in a few cases the rendering of Russian names into English is unfortunate—e.g. the Soviet economist A. Kac on p. 205 is presumably A. Katz). But these are minor blemishes on a very useful, informative and competent work.

MAURICE DOBB.

International Law and the Use of Force by States

Ian Brownlie

Oxford University Press. 532 pp. 75s.

THIS IS a learned and careful study of the development of a small but important section of International Law—namely, the restrictions imposed by that law on the resort by states to the use of force, or to the threat of its use, against other states.

Dr. Brownlie treats the subject historically, and gives a pretty vivid picture of the rapidity with which International Law—a complex conception, dealing with important fields of life and death—has developed and is developing. He writes optimistically about both the improvements already achieved in this field and those that may be expected; but he 'keeps both feet on the ground' and is well aware of the difficulties in the way of progress towards better law and towards peace.

That he should be optimistic, and not unconvincingly optimistic, at a time when the threats of resort to the use of force between states, and the expenditure on preparation for such resort, are far greater than they have been at any previous period, will puzzle many intelligent people who think that they know more or less what law is, and think that International Law is a branch of law! In truth, international law is not law at all in the sense in which jurists understand and define law; it is laid down by no one sovereign

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state, nor are there any sanctions used by any state to enforce it. It is simply a set of more or less agreed rules for the conduct by states of their relations with one another, derived from many sources and possessed of no more than moral force in that least moral of all fields, international relations. It is inevitable, moreover, that it lacks certainty and definiteness. A superficial observer might think that 'law' which cannot be enforced, is difficult to state with precision, and is constantly broken, amounts to very little; but he would be wrong. Lawyers and laymen alike must realise that international law does exist, and is of great importance; it has long exercised great influence on the behaviour of states. In these days of wider and more vocal public opinion, when wars are more horrible and more clearly seen to be horrible, its influence can only increase, and is increasing. More than ever before, under its influence, even the worst of governments has to pause and reflect before doing what it wants to do in its own selfish interests, and to consider anxiously how much it will suffer at the hands of public opinion, both abroad and at home, if it persists in its evil ways. This imperfect 'law' has already helped to stop a good many wars, and will help to stop more.

If international law lacks precision —and it may be that in practice its uncertainties are little greater than those to be found in disputed cases of true law—it is still ascertainable. Its sources are many and varied; the old practices of states, their more modern practices, their treaties and agreements of all kinds, especially the Covenant of the League of Nations and the United Nations Charter, their actual behaviour in various situations, *including* their frequent and flagrant breaches of well-established international law, and the views of writers of textbooks, all contribute to the ever-developing body of international law, so that it becomes almost impossible either to obey its precepts, or to disobey them, or to write about them, without making some contribution, great or small, good or bad, to its development.

Dr. Brownlie writes simply and straightforwardly, on a groundwork of thorough research. The book is designed primarily for international lawyers, but it could almost be read with interest and advantage by laymen. It reminds us, as it goes along, of the inherent rascality, hypocrisy, and lack of scruple displayed by capitalist governments, whose habits of doing what they want to do and then putting their propagandists to explain or excuse it by all sorts of reasoning that was not in their minds when they acted—a habit of course used extensively in internal affairs for the bamboozlement of their own nationals—and of constantly inventing new ways of dressing up aggression as self-defence (with an ingenuity scarcely paralleled even by their tycoons when arranging not to pay income-tax). None of these, nor any other of the bad habits of the larger capitalist states, makes the task of interpreting or of applying international law any easier; but Dr. Brownlie shows that it can nevertheless be applied and is being of use day by day.

I can make a few minor criticisms of the book, which do not detract from my general approval of it. The reader should, I feel, sometimes be told a little more of the background; for example, the *Caroline* case, which is cited—usefully—several times, would be more easily followed if the facts of it were

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stated more fully. And the full and interesting argumentation based on several of the Articles of the Covenant of the League of Nations would be easier to follow if the full text of the Articles were given. And Dr. Brownlie is less emphatic in condemning the use of nuclear weapons as illegal than I would have expected; (see *Labour Monthly*, 1955, p. 301).

The book is a good book; it would be interesting to see a book by the author designed to tell laymen just what international law is, and to what extent it can serve the cause of peace.

D. N. PRITT.

A History of British Trade Unionism
Henry Pelling
Macmillan. 288 pp. 42s.

CAMBRIDGE-EDUCATED, Oxford-based, 43-year-old Henry Pelling is emulating his master, the late G. D. H. Cole, in the quantity of his output in the fashionable field of labour movement history; and what may be called his Establishment short history of trade unionism is evidently intended for mass distribution, since it is appearing in a 5s. Penguin as well as the expensive, illustrated edition under review.

Mr. Pelling combines erudition (witness his formidable bibliographies) with a lively and readable style, and he competently covers the ground. Yet I find his book basically academic. Everything, including the most dramatic episodes—like Tommy Hepburn in Durham—is donnishly dehydrated.

As for the author's basic approach, this can hardly be described as other than firmly right wing. His concluding perspective is one of a streamlined trade unionism operating an 'incomes policy' harmoniously as the labour associate of monopoly capital. He is avowedly anti-Communist, and carries this to the point where he lets it be assumed that the Communist Party approved of the E.T.U. ballot-rigging, without so much as a hint of the Party's public repudiation of these practices. This is scarcely scholarly.

But in general there is a certain subjective quality about Mr. Pelling's scholarship, evidenced by his strict exclusion of the obvious Marxist works—my own, for example—from his bibliographies. As he lists the most recondite papers and unpublished theses, it amused me to note that he is prepared to carry his animus to the point of not citing, for instance, a 1939 paper of mine which is the only documentation in English of the notorious anti-union campaign of *The Times* in 1901-2.

When forced to refer to a first-hand work by a Communist, as in the case of Wal Hannington's 'Unemployed Struggles', he adds with a perceptible sniff 'may be used with caution'. With respect, and no sniff, I would apply the same phrase to Mr. Pelling's book.

ALLEN HUTT.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

BOOKS

The Last Chronicle of Bouverie Street. G. Glenton and W. Pattinson. Allen & Unwin. 218 pp. 25s.
Africa: The Way Ahead. Jack Woddis. Lawrence & Wishart. 174 pp. 21s.

BOOKLETS

Marxism After 80 Years. Andrew Rothstein. Marx Memorial Library. 24 pp. 1s. 6d.
History of the Pan-African Congress. Ed. G. Padmore. Hammersmith Bookshop. 74 pp. 15s.

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'UNDEMOCRATIC?'

A LABOUR Councillor tells me a story illustrating the Tory outlook on 'democracy'. During a council debate where the issue was how to enable property owners to increase the value of their dwellinghouses at public expense, my friend had threatened to discuss it with tenants, particularly council tenants whose rent was being raised; and remarked that there was likely to be a good attendance at the next council meeting. This horrified the Tory majority. To rouse the voters and encourage them to attend their own council chamber was 'quite undemocratic', they chorused. Hadn't the people elected official representatives? they should now go back to their place at kitchen sink or garden shed and leave public affairs to their elected leaders. To seek to influence events, except by very occasionally marking a ballot paper with their cross, was 'undemocratic'. Leave it to your leaders: a Tory outlook indeed. Yet there were even delegates at the Labour Party Conference at Scarborough last month so nervous lest discussion of a peace policy, public ownership or even wages might 'rock the boat', that they argued that any fight on policy could and should be left 'until we're in'. Leave it, in fact, to your leaders. You almost rub your eyes and say: which conference am I at? What a way to run an election! (Indeed, what a way to lose one!) In 1945 on the day the new Parliament assembled with its huge Labour majority at last ('give us the votes and we will finish the job'), I asked a Minister, now dead, how he planned to overcome the resistance that implementing his policy must rouse amongst vested interests? From which quarter did he think most trouble would come? He replied: 'From our own back benches, of course'. That was a typical Tory reply—from the lips of a Labour Minister.

A Scottish reader remarks that 'this is indeed a time when many people have reason to feel confused and uncertain. We have the prospect of an election in the near future when the people will, under our weird party system, be offered a choice between Tories who admit they are Tories and Tories who do not admit their guilt. It is bound to be very difficult for simple honest folk to know what they should really do. For me, of course, I have certain guiding lights and *LM* is one of the brightest'. The clear treatment of the relation of the fight for a Labour victory over Toryism and for Communist representation as an integral part of the fight against Toryism, has been found particularly helpful by many readers. Here are

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a few examples of how *LM* is being used to defeat a Tory outlook and to clear confusion, both steps vital to democracy. A railway shopman, and a leading figure on his district committee, has found himself constantly using arguments from Ted Hill's hard-hitting *Trade Unions and the Labour Government* and R.P.D.'s October Notes *What Kind of Labour Government?* He tells me he cannot remember when there was so much discussion on basic questions. Many made most effective use of the September *LM* too: the Notes, *Problems of Trade Unionism,* and J. R. Campbell's *The Siamese Twins—Neddy and Nicky* were found invaluable to meet the argument: 'wage restraint is all right if you restrain profits too'. Will Paynter on *Automation* in August made a deep impression: not only were 1,000 extra copies sold, but it was reprinted in no less than four trade union journals. So those three issues alone contained authoritative articles from perhaps the two most widely respected trade union leaders, Paynter and Ted Hill, and *also* exclusive articles from premiers of two 'new countries': Jomo Kenyatta and Cheddi Jagan. We say to readers old and new: if you are keen to destroy quickly the typical Tory outlook once and for all and to clear confusion amongst the working class, extend *LM*'s influence. Look at *these* articles and consider how to plan to put *this* number into new hands.

ANGELA TUCKETT

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Published by the proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3, and printed by Wembley News, Wembley, Middlesex, Great Britain. Registered for transmission by Magazine Post to Canada, including Newfoundland.

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